

**MICHAEL SOMMER**  
PRESIDENT  
PRÉSIDENT  
PRÄSIDENT  
PRESIDENTE

**SHARAN BURROW**  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
SECRÉTAIRE GÉNÉRALE  
GENERALSEKRETÄRIN  
SECRETARIA GENERAL

Monsieur Abdelaziz Bouteflika  
Président de la République d'Algérie  
El Mouradia  
Alger  
ALGÉRIE  
Fax: + 213 21.691.595  
E-mail: [president@el-mouradia.dz](mailto:president@el-mouradia.dz)

HTUR/MP

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### **Algeria – Unionists on hunger strike**

Dear President Bouteflika,

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), on behalf of 175 million workers in 151 countries, is writing to you as a matter of urgency over the hunger strike of nine Algerian trade union leaders representing courthouse clerks. The strike is now entering its fourth week and the ITUC is very concerned about their health.

The ITUC has been informed that the nine unionists, Leïla Aberkane, Rabia Menaa, Nadia Derouiche, Zahia Boutaoui, Fouzia Bouziani, Mourad Ghedia, Saad Bourekba, Azziza Haddadi, and Beldjani DJEMAI are now in a serious condition, having already lost around 10% of their body weight. Several have been admitted to hospital for emergency treatment.

When the Justice Ministry refused to recognise their union, the National Federation of Justice Employees, affiliated to SNAPAP, the National Independent Union of Public Administration Personnel, its members launched a general strike on 10 April, which was met with violent repression, arrests, suspension of employees and a range of other acts. On 6 May, faced with continuing government intransigence, the nine members of the Federation's executive started their hunger strike, demanding to open up a dialogue with the Ministry.

We ask your Government to step back from its policy of confrontation, accept that these workers have the right to form and join their own trade union, enter into a dialogue and negotiate a comprehensive solution to the complaints they have raised.

We remind you that as a member of the ILO, Algeria is bound by international treaties, and your government must fulfil its obligations and respect trade union rights and fundamental liberties such as the right to organise.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. B. R.' with a stylized flourish at the end.

General Secretary